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Roxbury, Jan. 2, 1868.

My dear Frank:

I have sad and distressing intelligence to communicate to you in regard to our dear, loving friend, John Lawson, at Newcastle-on-Tyne. I have just received (sent by R.D. Webb) a copy of Saunders's News-Letter of the 18th ult., in which is a paragraph copied from the Newcastle Chronicle of the day previous, as follows:—

"At four o'clock this afternoon, a terrific explosion took place on the town moor. It appears that a seizure of compound nitro-glycerine had been made by the police. About three o'clock, the Sheriff of Newcastle, John Lawson, Esq., the Town Surveyor, Mr. Bryson, Sub-Inspector Wallis, and Constable Donald Bain left town in charge of a spring cart containing the dangerous compound, with the object of letting it run away in some of the gullies in the town moor, where it would be harmless. While they were manipulating the nitro-glycerine,

it exploded with a tremendous shock, hurling some of the men high into the air, and tearing up the grounds for many yards round. Police Constable Donald Bain and the three men in charge of the cart were literally blown to atoms, and the Sheriff of Newcastle and Mr. Bryson were frightfully injured, and rendered perfectly insensible. They were conveyed to the infirmary, and are not expected to survive many hours." In a note R. D. Webb says—"We hear by telegram that poor Mr. Dawson will probably be blinded for life." In either case—death, or being maimed and blind for life—is not the news heart-rending? What a weight of sorrow must be resting upon all hearts in that sweet home at Gateshead! I know you will feel deeply about this horrible event. Most anxious shall I be to get further particulars in regard to the fate of the dear, noble sufferer.

Yesterday was a most disagreeable and depressing day for New Year, it raining throughout. I did not venture out.

I suppose you will leave New York on Saturday morning, according to your programme; and perhaps be governed by the weather when you reach Worcester, in regard to going to see Birney.

All is going on well at home. Mattie is doing up household affairs with great industry and judgment. Your mother wrote to you yesterday.

William and Ellie went with me to Newburyport on Monday, to join in celebrating the 80th birth-day of our friend Mr. Ashby. Nearly ninety persons were present. A very pleasant occasion.

Love to Wendell, Lucy, & Mrs. McKim. Mr. McKim I suppose is absent. Heartly kisses for Lucy.

Your afflicted Father.

P. S. I open the envelope to
enclose the accompanying note from
R. D. Webb, this moment received.
You will see that dear Mr. Law-
son is dead. My heart aches.